



NEWS RELEASE

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests Thunder Basin National Grassland

Date: Oct. 22, 2010

Contact: Paula Guenther
970-723-2700

Bark Beetle Work Will Affect 3rd-4th Season Hunts in Units 18 and 171

(Walden, Colo.) Oct. 22, 2010 – Hazard tree removal projects on the Parks Ranger District will continue throughout the fall and winter. Forest Products, West Range Reclamation, and Rogue Resources will start soon to cut and haul dead trees from along Forest Roads in the Owl Mountain and Wheatley Creek areas. Tree falling and hauling will begin about November 1 in the Wheatley Creek area (Forest Roads 12 and 121 accessed from near Hot Sulphur Springs) and Owl Mountain South area (Forest Roads 740 and 750 accessed from near Rand). Activities will begin about November 15 in the Owl Mountain North area (Forest Roads 740 and 760 accessed from near Gould). Some of this work will continue through 2012.

During hazard tree falling and removal, roads will be closed to all public access, including motorized vehicles, foot travel, horse use, or snowmobiles. District Ranger Mike Wright acknowledges the timing will be difficult for hunters planning to visit Game Management Units 18 and 171 during the 3rd and 4th big game hunting seasons this year. "These areas are highest priority for hazard tree removal because of high use and forest condition -- this is a short term inconvenience for long term public safety," Wright said. Wright also pointed out that many popular areas will still be accessible, but hunters may need to use detours to reach them. "The Owl Mountain area itself will be accessible from the BLM side off County Road 27," he said. The Forest Road 790, 791 and 792 road system will be entirely open this fall, but will not be accessible from Forest Road 740, where gates will be installed to keep the public from entering the hazard tree removal project area along Forest Road 740. There will be no through travel on Forest Road 740 over Calamity Pass during the road closures.

Winter uses are also being considered. The District is working to identify a temporary alternate route in the Gould area to allow snowmobile trail grooming and a popular local winter event to go forward even though logging crews are currently planning to work through the winter. Because of the winter schedule one popular route for riders from Grand County will not be available, since the route over Illinois Pass follows Forest Road 750 down the Illinois River

toward Rand and Gould. More details will be available on changes in designated snowmobile routes when the plans are finalized this fall.

Hunters and other visitors planning trips to the Owl Mountain and Wheatley Creek areas are encouraged to call the Parks District early and then immediately before their visit for most current closures. Closure information is available by stopping by the District office at 100 Main Street in Walden during office hours Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Information is posted outside the District office, and is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 970-723-2700, then selecting Option 5 for the Recreation and Roads Hotline.

#